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SECT 01 OF 10842
SEC 1-2 OF 2

ACTION
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FM (b)(3):10 USC 424
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~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 ~~NOFORN~~ 0219
SUBJ: THIS IS (b)(3):10 USC 424
THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINISHED INTELLIGENCE
1. (U) COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)
2. (U) REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424
3. (U) TITLE: MILITARY AFFAIRS-DUST SETTLES ON ABORTIVE COUP BY MENENDEZ
4. (U) PROJECT NUMBER: N/A
5. (U) DATE OF INFORMATION: 791002-791010
6. (U) DATE OF REPORT: 791010
7. (U) DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 791002-791010, BUENOS AIRES
8. (U) REFERENCES: (b)(3):10 USC 424
9. (U) ASSESSMENT:
10. (U) ORIGINATOR: (b)(3):10 USC 424
11. (U) REQUEST EVALUATION: (b)(3):10 USC 424
12. (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(6)
13. (U)

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14. (U) SOURCE: A. "CLARIN" 791002 B. "CLARIN" 791003
C. "CLARIN" 791004 D. "CLARIN" 791005 E. "LA OPINION"
791007 F. "CLARIN" 791009 G. "CLARIN" 791009
15. (U) SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: DIRC-NO NOFORN TO AVOID
EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVERNMENT
16. (U) THE FOLLOWING EVENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE
790928-790929 REVOLT BY FORMER III CORPS COMMANDER
MENENDEZ: ARMY CINC VIOLA OPTED FOR LENIENT DISCIPLINARY
DETENTIONS FOR MENENDEZ AND HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, MARADONA--
90 DAYS DETENTION FOR MENENDEZ, AND LESS FOR MARADONA;
MENENDEZ, ON HIS WAY TO DETENTION IN CORRIENTES, INDULGED
IN FURTHER CRITICISM OF JUNTA PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES,
FOMENTING SPECULATION OF AN INCREASED PERIOD OF DETENTION;
IN LA RIOJA AND SAN LUIS, ENGINEER BATALLION AND ARTILLERY GROUP
COMMANDERS WERE REPLACED; THREE RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS
SERVING IN POSITIONS IN THE MEDIA IN CORDOBA WERE FIRED
IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR REPORTING OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING
THE REVOLT BY MENENDEZ; AND SIX COLONELS (III ARMY CORPS)
WERE PLACED UNDER ARREST IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR ACTIONS
DURING THE ABORTIVE REVOLT.
22. (U) DETAILS: 1. SOURCE A REPORTED ON 791002 THAT
GENERALS MENENDEZ AND MARADONA WOULD SPEND 90 DAYS IN
DETENTION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR INSUBORDINATION.
SOURCE B REPORTED THAT MENENDEZ WOULD SERVE HIS
DETENTION IN CORRIETES (II CORPS JURISDICTION), WHILE
MARADONA WOULD SERVE A LESSER DETENTION IN BAHIA BLANCA
(V CORPS JURISDICTION).
2. ACCORDING TO SOURCE C, MENENDEZ INDULGED IN FURTHER
CRITICISM OF JUNTA ACTIONS, ASKING RHETORICALLY AT ONE
POINT WHY AN UNCONSTITUTIONALLY EMPOWERED JUNTA ADHERES
TO SUPREME COURT DIRECTIVES, WHEN IT SHOULD CONDUCT ITS
AFFAIRS IN "MILITARY STYLE." SAME REPORT INDICATED THAT
THE NEW COMMANDER OF THE 141 ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION
BATALLION WOULD BE COL. JORGE PEDRO MALAGAMBA, REPLACING
COL. ANTON MOLINARI; 141ST ENG. CON. BATALLION IS HQ IN
LA RIOJA. FURTHER, THE NEW COMMANDER OF THE 141 AIR
DEFENSE ARTILLERY GROUP WOULD BE LT. COL. EDUARDO JORGE
BLANCO, REPLACING LT. COL. PAULINO ENRIGUE FURIO. DAILY
"LA NACION" OF 791004 REPORTED, ADDITIONALLY, THAT THREE
RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS SERVING IN RADIO/TELEVISION STATIONS
IN CORDOBA HAD BEEN REMOVED, IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR
REPORTING DURING THE MENENDEZ REVOLT.

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3. SOURCE D REPORTED THAT IT APPEARED LIKELY THAT AS A RESULT OF MENENDEZ' INOPPORTUEN REMARKS, HIS DETENTION PERIOD WOULD BE INCREASED. IN A SEPARATE BUT RELATED REPORT, SAME SOURCE REPORTED AIR FORCE CINC GRAFFIGNA'S DENIAL OF UNREST WITHIN THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE.

4. SOURCE E REPORTED THAT ARMY CINC VIOLA WOULD MAKE A MAJOR SPEECH IN LATE OCTOBER RELATING TO MILITARY MATTERS. SAME SOURCE DISCUSSED THE MANNER IN WHICH CINC VIOLA ARRIVED AT HIS DECISION AS TO HOW TO DISCIPLINE MENENDEZ: THE

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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Sec. 2.2(b)

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DE RUESBAA [redacted] 2851946
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DECISION RESTED ENTIRELY WITH VIOLA, AND HIS CHOICES OF ACTION WERE EITHER COURT MARTIAL, OR DETENTION, THE LATTER OF WHICH WAS CHOSEN IN THE INTEREST OF PRESERVING MILITARY DISCIPLINE. THE REPORT ADDED THAT VIOLA'S DECISION NOT TO COURT MARTIAL MENENDEZ IN NO WAY SETS A PRECEDENT. FURTHER, CIVILIAN SECTORS EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE LENIENCY OF THE PUNISHMENT FOR MENENDEZ (SEE A/ARMA COMMENT).
5. SOURCE F REPORTED THAT RESOLUTIONS PROVIDING FOR THE FORCED RETIREMENTS OF MEENEDEZ AND MARADONA WERE PUBLISHED IN THE ARMY BULLETIN. THE SOURCE ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL CHANGE IN THE LENGHT OF TIME MENENDEZ WOULD BE DETAINED.
6. SOURCE G RPORTED THAT SIX COLONELS OF THE III ARMY CORPOS WERE BEING PLACED UNDER DETENTION, BUT THE REPORT OMITTED NAMES AND COMMANDS INVOLVED. SAME SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THAT WHEN NEW III ARMY COMMANDER VAQUERO ARRIVED TO TAKE COMMAND OF THE III CORPS, MORALE WAS LOW, AND DIVISIONS PREVALENT

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WITHIN THE CORPS. VAQUERO ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT BRIGADES AND UNITS WERE RESPONDING TO ORDERS OF BDE COMMANDERS.
RO COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE DETENTION OF SIX ADDITIONAL COLONELS WOULD INDICATE THE ARMY'S DETERMINATION TO WEED OUT ANY FURTHER SOURCES OF UNREST WITHIN THE ARMY--PARTICULARLY WITHIN THE III CORPS. THE THREE NEWS MEDIA CASUALTIES IN CORDOBA WERE PERHAPS MINOR ONES IN THE LIGHT OF LIVELY AND UNRESTRAINED PRESS COVERAGE OF THE REVOLT. MENENDEZ' INCISIVE STATEMENTS, ALONG WITH CAUSING EMBARRASSMENT TO VIOLA, MAY HAVE THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF OPENING UP PUBLIC DISCCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES TO CORPS COMMANDERS AND OTHER SUB-JUNTA LEVEL OFFICIALS. IN THIS CONNECTION, III CORPS COMMANDER VAQUERO POINTEDLY REFRAINED FROM COMMENTING PUBLICLY ON CURRENT ISSUES, ON 791008, IN DEFERENCE TO VIOLA, SAYING THAT THIS WOULD ONLY CAUSE DISORDER AND INVITE STATEMENTS BY HIS COUNTERPARTS IN THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY. ONE DAY LATER, HOWEVER, AIR FORCE AIR OPERATIONS COMMANDER (GEN) CAPELLINI PUBLICLY COMMNETED ON NUMEROUS CURRENT ISSUES, INCLUDING THE JUNTA'S MUCH TALKED-ABOUT (BUT AS OF YET UNSEEN) POLITICAL PLAN; CAPELLINI, WHO LED AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THEN-PR SIDENT ISABEL PERON IN 1975, SAID THAT "A PROPERLY STRUCTURED POLITICAL PLAN DOES NOT EVEN EXIST." THE FOLLOWING DAY, 790910, CAPELLINI AGAIN MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS CONCERNING A NUMBER OF CURRENT MILITARY/POLITICAL ISSUES. THEY WERE NOTABLY MORE SUBDUED, AND CAPELLINI SAID THAT AIR FORCE CINC GRAFFIGNA WAS THE SOLE SPOKESMAN FOR THE AIR FORCE ON CURRENT ISSUES.
(b)(3):10 COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ A. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE ARMY HAS, FOR THE PAST YEAR, TRIED TO PORTRAY TO THE PUBLIC AND FOREIGN COMMUNITY A PICTURE OF SOLIDARITY AMONG THE RANKS. NUMEROUS SOURCES IN THE GRADES OF LTC AND COL HAVE STATED THAT THEY HAVE MATURED TO A POINT WHERE CONFLICT WITHIN THE OFFICER RANKS COULD NO LONGER RESULT IN BLOODSHED AMONG OFFICERS. THE EVENTS OF THE RECTN PAST HAVE ALMOST PROVEN THIS GROUP OF OFFICERS TO BE WRONG. TALKS WITH THIS SAME GROUP SINCE THE MENENDEZ MINI-REVOLT STILL REVEAL THAT THEY SEE MENENDEZ' ACTION AS PURE STUPIDITY. NOTWITHSTANDING THIS AGE GROUP'S OPINION, IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT WITHIN THE HIGHER OFFICER RANKS THERE IS ENOUGH DISCONTENT OVER THE VIDELA/ VIOLA METHOD OF GOVERNING TO FOMENT A MINI-REVOLT.
B. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ONE POINT OF VIEW NOT YET VERIFIED IS THAT MENENDEZ CALLED FOR VIOLA'S RESIGNATION BELIEVING

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THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM CAVALRY GENERALS
LOCATED IN BUENOS AIRES--I.E., POSSIBLY SUAREZ MASON
AND GEN. CAMPS, AMONG OTHERS. THE REVOLT FAILED WHEN
THE SUPPORT DID NOT APPEAR, FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER.
C. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ VIOLA MOST PROBABLY DID NOT COURT MARTIAL
MENENDEZ BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT FURTHER DIVISION WITHIN
THE OFFICER RANKS. GEN. MENENDEZ WAS A POPULAR GENERAL
AMONG HIS OFFICERS. [redacted] HAS BEEN TOLD BY ONE SOURCE
THAT MENENDEZ WILL SPEND HIS 90 DAYS UNDER RESTRAINT IN
CORRIENTES; THIS HAS BEEN CONFIRMED IN THE MEDIA. HE
WILL PROBABLY STAY IN THE OFFICERS CLUB (CASINO DE FOFICIALES)
AND HAVE FREE MOVEMENT IN THE POST, BUT HE WILL NOT BE
ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE POST.
D. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ THE FEELING AMONG JUNIOR MAJORS AND CAPTAINS
OVER WHAT TRANSPIRED IS MIXED. SEVERAL MAJORS HAVE STATED
THAT MENENDEZ' ACTIONS WERE ILL-CONCEIVED. HOWEVER, THERE
ARE A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF SENIOR CAPTAINS WHO, WHILE NOT
ADVOCATING A FORCEFUL REMOVAL OF THE VIDELA/VIOLA TEAM,
ARE MOST UNHAPPY WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE BEING RUN, AND THEY
HAVE BEEN VOICING THEIR DISCONTENT MORE READILY RECENTLY. AS THE
PRINCIPLE REASONS FOR THEIR DISCONTENT, THEY CITE: THE RELEASE
OSOPXNUPECIALLY SINCE THE KLEIN BOMBING) THE
LACK OF GOVERNMENT RESOLVE TO ELIMINATE THE GUERRILLA THREAT
ONCE AND FOR ALL, BY ELIMINATING THE REMAINING GUERRILLAS.
THE VISIT BY THE OAS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ADDED FUEL
TO THE BELIEF, AMONG SOME OFFICERS, THE THE PRESENT
GOVERNEMNT'S STANCE ON TERRORISM IS TOO SOFT. IT WOULD
APPEAR THAT VIOLA HAS THE ARMY UNDER CONTROL FOR NOW,
AND THAT HE HAS SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO CONTINUE WITH HIS
PRESENT POLICY. HOWEVER, THE FEELING OF DISCONTENT
WHICH EXISTS WITHIN THE JUNIOR OFFICER RANKS COULD BECOME
MORE VOCAL IN THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY.
E. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ THE SIX COLONELS WHO HAVE SINCE BEEN
DETAINED (AS A RESULT OF THEIR ACTIONS DURING MENENDEZ'
REVOLT) ARE MOST PROBABLY MEMBERS OF III ARMY CORPS STAFF
AND COMMANDERS OF CORPS GENERAL SUPPORT UNITS.
F. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ THE LATEST WORD FROM GENDARMERIA HQ IS
THAT MG ANTONIO DOMINGO BUSSI WILL BE MOVING SOON TO
TAKE COMMAND OF ARGENTINE ARMY V CORPS, REPLACING VAQUERO.
THIS MSG AMEMBA COORDINATED. ~~REVW 11 OCT 1985~~
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